

226 UTAHNS NOW HAVE A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Written by Robert Snarr, Substance Abuse and Mental Health

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Salt Lake - With the economy's downturn, homelessness has become a reality for many Utahns. On any given night, more than 3,000 Utahns are homeless and, according to the most recent count, approximately 16,000 people are homeless in a year.



During the cold months, many of the local shelters have waiting lists and often refer people to the overflow shelter in Midvale. In response to this growing concern, Utah officials from state, county, local government, as well as private and non-profit agencies, began a 10 year plan to end chronic homelessness in 2004.

The fifth annual Homeless Summit was held this October in Salt Lake City where professionals from across the state convened to learn the best practices and new approaches to ending chronic homelessness. Utah was recognized by the nations Homeless Czar, Philip Mangano, Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Mangano congratulated Utahns for their commitment to ending chronic homelessness stating, "Utah's plan is a model for the country".

Along with helping our homeless friends improve their quality of life, Utah has shown cost savings in law enforcement, jail time, and emergency services by providing a "Housing First" model. This last year, 226 chronically homeless individuals many who suffer from substance abuse and mental illness, were housed through this project. The Housing First model also provides needed supportive services and employment training.

To get involved call (801)538-4080 or email, rsnarr@utah.gov